Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 129369
ORIGIN AF-10

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INRE-00 ARA-14 /049 R

DRAFTED BY STF:RLKATES
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S/S-O:TMARTIN
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O 221403Z MAY 78 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BONN NIACT IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 129369

E.O. 11652:

TAGS: MOPS,CG

SUBJECT: LONDON OBSERVER ACTION ON ZAIRE

REFTEL: HABIB/SWING CONVERSATION

1. FOLLOWING TEXT OF COLIN LEGUM WHICH APPEARED IN MAY 21 EDITION OF LONDON OBSERVER:

QUOTE: EAST GERMANS, NOT CUBANS, ARE MASTERMINDING THE MILITARY ATTACK AGAINST PRESIDENT MOBUTU'S REGIME IN ZAIRE. THEIR INTERVENTION -- AS SURROGATES FOR THE RUSSIANS -- HELPS TO OBSCURE THE REALITY OF A GENUINE MOVEMENT OF POLITICAL DISCONTENT IN ZAIRE LED BY A SUPREME LEBERATION COUNCIL.

EAST GERMANY'S DEFENCE MINISTER, GENERAL HEINZ HOFFMANN, WAS LEADING A MILITARY DELEGATION IN ANGOLA WHEN THE REBEL ATTACK WAS LAUNCHED A WEEK AGO AGAINST ZAIRE'S SHABA PROVINCE, FORMERLY KNOWN AS KATANGA. THE ATTACK CAME JUST
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THE EAST GERMAN DELEGATION, WHICH STAYED IN ANGOLA FROM

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BEEN IN CHARGE OF PLANNING CLANDESTINE SUPPORT FOR MOBUTU'S OPPONENTS SINCE THE MIDDLE OF 1976.

ALTHOUGH THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MILITARY DELEGATION WERE GIVEN DAILY FRONT-PAGE PROMINENCE BY NEUES DEUTSCHLAND, THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE EAST GERMAN COMMUNIST PARTY, THE REPORTS LEFT OUT ALL MENTION OF THE VISITS IT MADE ON 8 MAY TO ANGOLAN MILITARY BASES AT LUSO, TEXEIRA DE SOUSA AND HENRIQUE DE CARVALHO.

THE DELEGATION WAS ACCOMPANIED AROUND THE COUNTRY BY ANGOLA'S MINISTER OF DEFENCE. HENRIQUE TELES CARREIRA, AND HOFFMANN AND POPPE WERE RECEIVED BY PRESIDENT AGOSTINHO NETO.

THROUGHOUT THE VISIT BOTH THE EAST GERMANS AND ANGOLANS EMPHASISED IN THEIR PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS THE WAFFEN-BRUDERSCHAFT (BROTHERHOOD IN ARMS) BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

THE EAST GERMANS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE ANTI-MOBUTU STRUGGLE APPEARS TO BE DIRECTLY LINKED TO THE ROLE THEY HAVE PLAYED IN TRYING TO STOP THE WEST GERMAN COMPANY, OTRAG, FROM DEVELOPING A NEW TYPE OF LOW-COST, LONG-RANGE ROCKET TO LIFT "SPY" SATELLITES. MOBUTU HAS A SECRET AGREEMENT WITH OTRAG ALLOWING IT TO USE THE WHOLE OF UNCLASSIFIED

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SHABA PROVINCE FOR THE ROCKET DEVELOPING PROGRAMME.

THE EAST GERMAN AND SOVIET CAMPAIGN TO THWART OTRAG'S PROGRAMME WAS REVEALED IN THE OBSERVER ON 5 FEBRUARY THIS YEAR.

IT NOW TRANSPIRES THAT EAST GERMANY WAS ALLOCATED THE ROLE OF DESTABLISHING THE MOBUTU REGIME ON BEHALF OF THE WARSAW PACT POWERS EXACTLY TWO YEARS AGO. THE STRATEGY WAS WORKED OUT AT SECRET MEETINGS DURING THE NINTH CONGRESS OF THE EAST GERMAN COMMUNIST PARTY (SED) IN EAST BERLIN IN MAY 1976.

THE CONGRESS WAS ATTENDED BY AN OFFICIAL ANGOLAN DELEGATION, LED BY COMMANDANTE PEDRO MARIA IONHA, THE GOVERNOR OF HUAMBO PROVINCE AND A MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF MPLA, ANGOLA'S RULING PARTY. HE HELD SEVERAL MEETINGS WITH GEN. POPPE, WHO IS THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF EAST GERMANY.

THE MAIN POINTS OF THE EAST BERLIN PLAN TO OVERTHROW MOBUTU WERE:

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1. TO PROVIDE MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT OF THE CONGO (FNLC) WHOSE FORCES WERE -- AND REMAIN -- BASED IN ANGOLA UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF GEN. NATHANIEL MBUMBA. THE MILITARY AID INCLUDED WEAPONS TO PROVIDE THE FNLC WITH A STRIKE CAPACITY AGAINST ZAIRE'S AIR FORCE TO ALLOW FOR A LIGHTING THRUST AGAINST THE PRIMARY TARGETS IN SHABE -- DILOLO, KOLWEZI, LUBUMBASHI, BUKAMA, AND THE MILITARY BASE AT KAMINA.

SOVIET SAM MISSILES WERE USED ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE MARCH 1977 MILITARY INCASION OF SHABA FROM A CROSS THE ANGOLAN BORDER.

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2. TO CREATE 45 POCKETS OF "PERMANENT REVOLUTION" INSIDE SHABA. THESE WOULD BE SUPPLIED FROM ARMS DELIVERED TO THE ANGOLAN MILITARY BASES AT LUSO, TEXEIRA DE SOUSA AND HENRIQUE DE CARVALHO.

A LARGE NUMBER OF CZECH HEAVY DUTY MILITARY TRANSPORTERS --TATRA-- WERE DELIVERED TO ANGOLA IN 1976 FOR USE BY THE FNLC. - -

SINCE THE EAST BERLIN PLAN WAS EVOLVED TWO YEARS AGO. AN ESTIMATED 100 EAST GERMAN MILITARY EXPERTS HAVE BEEN DISPATCHED TO ANGOLA TO HELP THE FNLC IN TRAINING THE PLANNING ITS MILITARY STRATEGY. THE TEAM WORKED DIRECTLY UNDER GENERAL POPPE.

EAST GERMANY'S MILITARY SUPPORT FOR THE FLNC WAS KEPT SEPARATE FROM THE RUSSIAN AND CUBAN MILITARY EFFORT ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT NETO'S REGIME.

IN KEEPING WITH SOVIET BLOC STRATEGY, THE EAST GERMANS WERE UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO PLAY NO DIRECT PART IN THE FIGHTING. THAT WAS TO BE LEFT TO THE ZAIREAN REBELS--EVEN AT THE COST OF FAILURE, AS IN 1977.

ANGOLA'S INTEREST IN COOPERATION WITH THE SOVIET-EAST GERMAN PLAN IS TO ELIMINATE THE MILITARY CAMPS SET UP BY PRESIDENT MOBUTU ALONG ANGOLA'S BORDER FOR USE BY HOLDEN ROBERTO'S FRONT FOR THE NATIONAL LIBERATION OF ANGOLA (FNLA).

PRESIDENT NETO PRESENTED A MAP OF ALL THESE MILITARY CAMPS TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS IN LUANDA IN FEBRUARY 1976. LESS THAN THREE MONTHS LATER THE PLAN FOR DESTABILISING MOBUTU'S

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REGIME WAS WORKED OUT AT THE EAST BERLIN CONGRESS.

AFTER THE FAILURE OF THE 1977 ATTACK AGAINST SHABA, THE

FLNC SOUGHT TO WIDEN THE BASE OF ITS POLITICAL SUPPORT THROUGHOUT ZAIRE. THE HARD CORE OF THE FLNC IS MADE UP OF ETHNIC GROUPS FROM THE SHABA PROVINCE. GENERAL MBUMBA IS A LEADING FIGURE AMONG THE LUNDA, THE DOMINANT GROUP IN SHABA WHOSE LEADER WAS THE LATE MOISE TSHOMBE.

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MORE IMPORTANT, THOUGH, WAS THE ALLEGIANCE OF LAURENT KABILA'S PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONATY PARTY (PRP), WHICH HAS FOR ALMOST A DECADE KEPT UP CLANDESTINE ACTIVITIES AGAINST THE MOBUTU REGIME FROM SECRET BASES IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE OF ZAIRE.

ALL THE WESTERN NATIONS EXCEPT FRANCE HAVE TRIED TO AVOID TOO ACTIVE AN ASSOCIATION WITH THE MOBUTU REGIME IN THE PAST YEAR. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS ATTEMPTED TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT IT HAS NO VESTED INTEREST IN THE SURVIVAL OF THE MOBUTU REGIME.

THE WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN EMBARRASSED BY THE TERMS OF THE OTRAG AGREEMENT WITH ZAIRE WHICH IS ALLEGED TO HAVE INCLUDED THE PAYMENT OF LARGE SUM OF MONEY TO A SECRET

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APPROVED BY:EUR/CE:VGRAY
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P 251640Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 129369

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 129369 ACTION BONN DATED MAY 22:

QTE:NCLAS STATE 129369

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Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2614717
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LONDON OBSERVER ACTION ON ZAIRE
TAGS: MOPS, SOPN, CG, UK, GC, LONDON OBSERVER, (LEGUM, COLIN)
To: BONN
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/74b50799-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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